

To All the Comrades of the Trail

This poem was written by Don Blanding in his little book, *Vagabond's House*, published in 1928. It was called *To Don May – A friend who climbed mountains with me*.

It resonates with me when I think of our wonderful back packing experiences.

We knew the desolation of great heights
And the contentment of deep valleys;
We saw the moon leap silver from the mountain peaks
And watched the red sun die in a welter of mists on the horizon;
We knew the white swift decline of vast snow-fields
And the small beauty of forest flowers;
Our dreams rose with the smoke of our camp fires in the wilderness
And our friendship glowed with the embers of fir-fires;
We shared hunger, thirst and the great struggle toward the mountain top
As we shared peace, good food and pleasant rest of our night camps;
All these things...the dizziness of sudden precipices, straining muscles, weariness,
exaltation, the soothing fragrance of pine trees, the chatter of mountain streams
and the roar of furious rapids entered into the pattern of our friendship
and made it fine.

These things we knew together...
And these things we will remember.

Jean Koch